MONTEREY NEWS

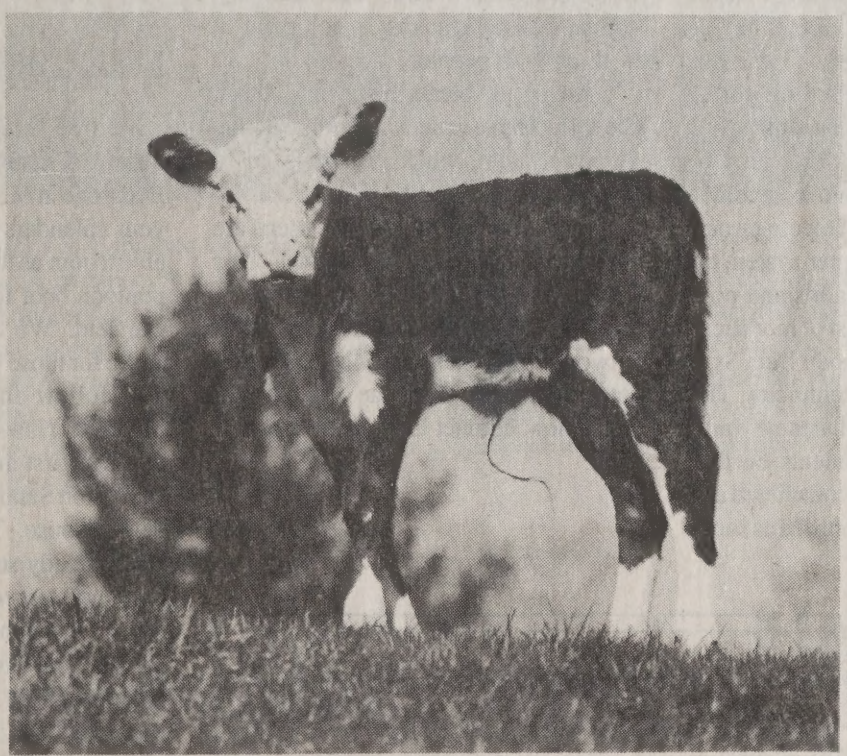
JUNE 1994

THE TOWN

One hundred and four Monterey citizens attended the annual Town Meeting on May 7, 1994, and either passed or passed over articles without a great deal of controversy.

Concerns about computer software and support engendered the most heated discussion. Several townspeople questioned the wisdom of ongoing appropriations for a computer system with which some users are not happy. Selectman Stefan Grotz informed the meeting that the system is "under scrutiny." He added that the Selectmen are aware of the dissatisfaction, and said a list of complaints will be presented to Moody Data Systems (the software contractor). Dick Tryon noted that the appropriation is requested every year and yet the computer system never seems to improve. "Maybe the Board should change its computer consultant for a new outlook," proposed Tryon. Matthew Breuer, a professional computer consultant, reminded the Selectmen that he had volunteered his services free of charge, and reiterated his offer during the meeting. Maynard Forbes, a member of the Monterey Fire Company with responsibility for its computer needs, said, "This town has paid $45,000 for a computer system that is supposed to be networked, and it's not." Selectman Peter Brown agreed that everything was not perfect, but said "people are exaggerating." The $5,000 appropriation was approved. (Recent developments on this issue are detailed in the final paragraphs of this story.)

An article requesting $19,800 for a new playground was also debated by voters. Fred Lancome complimented the folks who built the hockey rink because "they were sensitive enough to raise the money privately," and asked that this project be handled that way. Parks Commission member Tom Rosenthal explained that the skating rink is not on town property, therefore the town was unable to appropriate funds for that project. He went on to say that "the Parks Commission has agonized over the playground for years, and usually we end up adding or replacing equipment piecemeal." Martin Cherneff said he favored the playground, but wanted to amend the appropriation to $10,000, with the balance to be raised privately. One citizen (whose name I have been unable to learn) responded that the skating rink was an adult project accomplished with adult energy; he said, "We cannot expect small children to raise $10,000." Former town official Jed Lipsky, who drew applause for his support of the new playground, noted that monies for similar improvements had been granted to the school district, but the facilities are far from the center of Monterey. The proposed amendment failed and the full $19,800 was approved for new playground equipment.



P. MURKETT

In the elections held on May 7, 1994, Georgiana C. O'Connell was re-elected to the Board of Selectmen for a three-year term, and was sworn into office at the May 9 meeting of the Board. It was unanimously voted by the Selectmen that Peter S. Brown serve as Chair until the next town election. In the only two contests for office, Gary Shaw was elected to a three year term as an assessor, and Dean Amidon won re-election to the Board of Appeals for a five-year term.

On May 16, 1994, sealed bids were opened for the paving of sections of New Marlborough Road, Sandisfield Road, and Corashire Road. Five bids were received, and with the concurrence of Highway Superintendent Don Amstead, the Selectmen voted unanimously to accept the lowest bid, that from W. E. Williams Paving, Inc., of West Stockbridge, at the price of $31.25 per ton.

Police Chief Gareth Backhaus met with the Selectmen accompanied by Jeffrey Bynack, who has completed the sixteen-week Police Academy course, and is now taking a First Responder's course. Chief Backhaus requested that the Board appoint Bynack to the Police Department so he can be trained in use of the cruiser. Backhaus said Bynack will start with a ninety-day probation period, after which his performance will be evaluated for a permanent appointment. The Selectmen voted unanimously to appoint Jeffrey Bynack a provisional officer of the Monterey Police Department.

Stephen Bohn, the town's computer coordinator, met with the Selectmen and users of the town's computer system on May 12 to discuss complaints and possible system changes. A list of modifications was presented to Moody Data Systems, the town's software contractor. The computer firm responded that they would honor all contractual agreements, but that additional work would be considered enhancements, and would be billed as such. Selectman Peter Brown characterized the firm's response as "very negative."

Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier has worked with the computer system for over a year. Peter Brown and Stephen Bohn emphasized that she has given a 150% effort to understanding use of the system. Gauthier describes the software as very complex and "unnecessarily cumbersome." She has gotten approval to investigate the systems used by other towns, and report back to the Selectmen. Town Secretary and Treasurer Mary Ellen Brown is also unhappy with the computer system. Improvements will be sought. Stephen Bohn agrees that the system is labor intensive, and that this is especially difficult because Monterey has a lot of part-time and volunteer help; many users do not work with the complex system on a daily basis, and this slows progress. Bohn admitted that "Moody Data Systems is not great at working with people."

All is not bleak, however. Town Clerk Barbara Swann is staying with the Moody system, which she says has a good clerk's program.

At this time the various users are looking at individualized programs. This will make the work of each user easier, but will not put the information into a networked system accessible to all computer users, which was the original goal of the now defunct Computer Committee.

— Maggie Leonard

PARKS COMMISSION

With the skating rink dismantled and the boards stacked for the season, we turn our attention to warm weather matters. Voters approved the new playground at town meeting, and the Parks Commission must prepare specifications required to solicit bids, choose a site, and set the construction process in motion. Our next meeting is scheduled for June 2 at 7 p.m. in the town offices. Come and give us your ideas, or write us at P. O. Box 412 as soon as possible.

Dates for swimming lessons at the town beach this year are August 1–5 and 8–12. Forms to sign up are available at the General Store, the Roadside Store, and the town offices.

— Mick Burns

LAKE GARFIELD ASSOCIATION

July 9 is the date, and 9 (a.m.) is the time. A Canoe Flotilla is the event. Everyone in Monterey is welcome. Mark your calendars now so that you will be able to join us in your canoe, row boat, or pontoon boat for a guided tour of Lake Garfield. We will try and find boats or space for those who need it. More details will follow in the next issue of the *Monterey News*.

Our first meeting of the season will be held on Saturday, June 25 at 10 a.m. in the firehouse. Thanks to all of you who have already sent in your renewal dues (over half last year's membership by mid May). A reminder to all others that $20 enrolls your family for a year. Mail to Lake Garfield Association, Box 474, Monterey, MA. 01245.

— Muriel Lazzarini

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MAGGIE LEONARD

The Monterey General Store as it appears these days with restoration underway. Chris Dunlop is seen here at work on the roof, and a dog named Jack waits patiently by the front porch. A clapboard exterior with twelve-light, double-hung sash and a sand-colored standing seam metal roof are part of the plan. The chimney has been newly pointed up and topped off. The roof of the east wing will be raised to make room inside for a bakery; a ramp for handicapped access will be built at the east end of the front porch, with the bulletin board on the front wall of the east wing; an improved loading dock will include enclosed space for storage of returnable bottles and cans. South County Joiners (Phil Newey and crew) and Monterey Masonry (Mark Mendel and company) are contractors on the job. The Special Permit required for the project was unanimously approved by the Board of Appeals. For a recollection of storekeeper Julius Miner, see page 10.

FREE DISPOSAL

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Wednesday 8-1 Saturday 8-1 Sunday 10-6

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SOLID WASTE WATCHERS

There will be an opportunity for free disposal of furniture and bulky waste at the Monterey Transfer Station (otherwise known as The Dump) on the following dates:

Wednesdays, June 29 & July 6
8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Saturdays, July 2 & 9
8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Sundays, July 3 & 10
10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Items accepted in the bulky waste container include furniture, mattresses, rugs, televisions, vacuum cleaners, toasters, window frames, screens, old doors, bits and pieces left over from do-it-yourself household projects, etc.

Items *not* accepted: demolition debris, recyclable metals and white goods (refrigerators, ranges, etc.—these belong in the metal container always available at the transfer station), and toxic materials (pesticides, chemicals, engine oil, batteries, etc.).

Questions? Call Susannah Leigh, the Solid Waste District Coordinator, at 229-3353; or Wayne Burkhart, Monterey's Solid Waste District Commissioner, at 528-1114; or (as a last resort) me, at 528-0550.

This free disposal has been arranged by the eleven member towns of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District. Incidentally, the District Commissioners from member towns meet every third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Monterey Church basement. Eleven towns working together—imagine! Better yet, drop in sometime and see for yourself.

One thing you will see is that Monterey does pretty well at recycling. Our recycling rate in calendar 1993 (tonnage of recyclables divided by total municipal solid waste—the stuff we throw into the compactor that ends up in the landfill—plus recyclables) was 23%, third best among the eleven towns in the District, after Alford (33%) and Sheffield (25%). Last year the town sent 6% less municipal solid waste to the landfill than in 1992, at 305.73 tons, or about 760 pounds of trash per person in one year, counting all 805 Monterey residents. We recycled 8.32 pounds of plastics, and 132.18 pounds of paper, glass, and cans per person last year. —Just in case you were wondering.

If you're a Commissioner, or anyone else on the front lines of garbage policymaking, these numbers are vital stuff. Over the past year, a task force made up of Springfield Materials Recycling Facility (SMRF) participants, and including a representative of our District, worked at the behest of the state Department of Environmental Protection to establish criteria for free access to the SMRF, with the goal of making policy that will encourage recycling. Efficient operation of the SMRF requires a high volume of recyclable materials continually going through. The task force decided to set a minimum municipal recycling rate as the basis for free access to the SMRF. Then the state Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA) added the per-bag fee as an alternative criterion for free access. (This is a fee charged to users of a transfer station based on the volume of trash they send to the landfill or incinerator—so many dollars per bag.) The task force protested, emphasizing that free access must be driven by whatever specifically encourages recycling. Per-bag fees really address consumerism and wasteful packaging habits—both important issues, but not directly relevant to encouraging people to recycle, and load the SMRF with all the recyclable stuff they can bring in.

There's also a city mouse/country mouse issue with per-bag fees. There are too many ways to sneak around per-bag fees in the country, where unobserved drive-by dumping is easy to do along rural roads and in unattended private dumpsters. It's a crime that's difficult to police. Faced with a per-bag fee, some will no doubt try to mix trash with recyclables, resulting in contamination of recyclable loads, rejection at the recycling facilities, fines, etc. What's more, towns are assessed for trash by weight, not volume, so wiseguys can buy kitchen compactors and stuff an obscene mass into one bag.

The SMRF task force then proposed that actual revenues raised by towns for waste disposal be made a part of the free access criteria, rather than just the establishment of a per-bag fee. All users of the Monterey transfer station, for example, pay a uniform fee, and this revenue amounts to a substantial portion of our

The Myth of the New England Landscape:

The Bidwell House Acreage

AN ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM
Friday, June 10, 7:30 pm
Monterey Church of Christ
Free of Charge

Featuring Jack Larkin, Old Sturbridge Village,
Russell Handsman, University of Rhode Island, and
Michael Steinitz, Massachusetts Historical Commission

Organized by The Bidwell House, Monterey, Massachusetts

For directions and further information:
call 413-528-6888

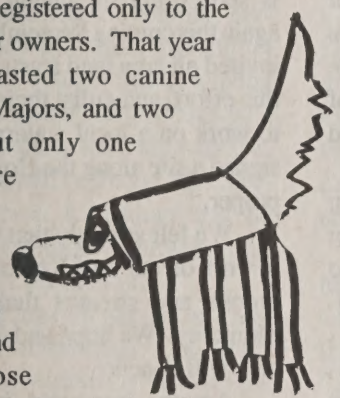
real disposal costs. In terms of revenue and recycling rates, these options have worked well here. The one town in our district that already has a per-bag fee also has by far the lowest recycling rate. Granting a town like that free access to the SMRF would be unfair, and undermine truly effective efforts to recycle.

The political tug-of-war continues. We'll let you know the outcome.

— Joyce Scheffey

DOGGEREL NOW

Dogs registered in Monterey in the year 1870 were twenty-seven in number. Of these, sixteen were named and eleven were registered only to the names of their owners. That year the town boasted two canine Carlos, two Majors, and two Shepards, but only one Shep. There was Cola, Trip, Curley, Bumbo, and Cherry. Also Colonel (?) and three whose names are indecipherable, although two were clearly black and white in color, and one of these was a male shepard. The third was black and brown, a male, but only part shepard.



In 1994 the Monterey Town Clerk recorded the names of 160 dogs as they were registered. They are:

Django
Akeva Ebony Fairah
Isaac Mariah
Yoyo Jessica Max
Honey Colleen Ruffian Sting
Oliver Princess Barrington Shadow
Bricklayerslucy
Sister Tabitha Shelby Sierra
KokoJo Mace
Dynamite
Butterscotch Dixie and Slick.

Brady Bogie Mocha Greyce
SnuffyMcDuff
Bear Lupa Tassey
Charlie Star Mustard Max
Mombo Smokey Spencer Jack
Biko Makeba Mischief Bracken
Doey Timber Romy Thea
Graestokes
Wrinkles
Ziggy Rocky and Josh.

Murphey Patches Dusty Tara
Bossi Fletcher Hi Raoul
Jalapeno
Bear Puppie Zuppa
Buddy Sugar Zackery Shep
Rumsey Tasha Susan Susie
Willie Ubu
Crumpet Bear Dumpling Daisy
Lucky Lady Peco Winston
Folly and Clyde.

Bonnie Ginger Casey Nichie
Yori Toby Hannah Pepper
Einstein Esha
Mr. Sister
Sean Spenser Omie Chelsea Cosmo
Inca Molly Elwood Emily Shadow
Sophie's Choice
Febie Zachary Sarah
Phoebe Molson Mickey
Molly and Molly.

Natasha Lucy Libby Fluffy Princess
Toby Tippy Toby Teddy Myra Joni
Odie Rosie Buddy Ollie
Callie Chamie Cailte Hallie
Chelsea Tracy Simon
Nikki Ariel Sadie Jake
Willie Nikki
Spencer Lucy
Annie Oakey Gandalf
Sparky Bigfoot Parky
Becky Sheena
Ursula Ivy and Maxine.

Good dogs, every one. They may wander now and then, or chew the rug, but they never go to meetings, and they don't know from money, only love.

Don't forget the rabies virus, still alive in the region's wild animal population. Protect your pets with inoculations, and keep them away from wild creatures. Wear rubber gloves when you handle him if Bigfoot, Mombo, etc. does get into trouble. For help or information, call Dale Duryea, Wildlife Control Officer in Monterey, at 528-9335.

CHURCH NEWS

Back in the early 1980s when Sally and I were using our cabin on Lake Garfield as a summer retreat and renewing old contacts with Monterey, we became aware of the unusual vitality brewing in the town. Those were the days of increased concern for the environment (Monterey Lights the Way) and of active sharing of the many wonderful resources of our own and neighboring artists. The vigor for this activity came from the commitment of some special folks with vision, and a fair share of the energy originated in the church in the center of town. It was the excitement of a community alive to its own values more than the beauty of the lake and the surrounding countryside that drew us to want to live here.

It seems that Monterey has entered a resting phase in its life. Now, temporarily without a pastor, our church has begun to seek new visions. Some of us are bold enough to feel that the power of the Spirit in our town is not dead, but only waiting for a new burst of energy.

Cliff Aerie, in his last service with us, used as his text the story of Nehemiah and a small band of Jews who, returning from exile to ruined Jerusalem, set themselves the task of rebuilding the temple and its walls. This they did in spite of the taunts of neighbors.

So we in this small congregation look to the task of rebuilding our church—not just the structure, although it too needs much attention, but also the size and vigor of the congregation. We are convinced that Monterey needs and deserves a center for worship and spiritual growth, and we welcome anyone venturesome enough to join us.

"I will gather them thence and bring them to the place which I have chosen, to make my name dwell there." (Nehemiah 1:9)

— Bob Emmel

THE BIDWELL HOUSE

The Bidwell House is sponsoring two free events this June. On Saturday, June 4, starting at 1 p.m., Monterey's Jane Kessler will lead a walk in search of wildflowers on The Bidwell House property. The rain date is Sunday, June 5.

On Friday, June 10 at 7:30 p.m. in the Monterey United Church of Christ, the Museum will host a symposium entitled "The Myth of the New England Landscape: The Bidwell House Acreage." Looking around The Bidwell House property today you see nothing but woods, and for miles that's mostly what there is. It's hard to imagine that this was once the center of the community, as well as part of a large farm. Here, as throughout most of New England, the landscape has changed dramatically from the Native American period through the present. We will document these changes in the symposium.

Through grants from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Massachusetts Forest Stewardship Small Grants Program, three scholars have been researching these changes as they occurred around The Bidwell House. Dr. Russell Handsman, who teaches at Rhode Island University, is a specialist in Native American studies with an emphasis on the Mahican peoples of Berkshire County. Dr. Handsman will look at Mahican use of upland areas like Monterey. Jack Larkin is a specialist in agricultural history and Director of Research at Old Sturbridge Village. He will describe farming practices of the Bidwell family from 1750 through 1856. Dr. Michael Steinitz, a cultural geographer from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, will focus on subsequent owners and residents of The Bidwell House, looking closely at the tenure of the Richmond Iron Works, the Carrington family, and finally the second home owners of the twentieth century. We will display a series of maps at the symposium to show changes in the property size from 1750 to the present; a map showing the location of historic features; and a rare late-eighteenth-century map from our archives which shows the location of town roads, many of which no longer exist.

Each historical period had its impact on our landscape. As many of you have read, the museum will create six hiking trails over the next ten years. The symposium is the first step in our plan to use the trails to teach environmental history. Last year we completed the Meeting House Trail leading to the site of Monterey's first meeting house, built in the 1740s. Other features found on our property and to be included on trails are foundations of farm buildings, a maple sugaring site, a charcoal pit, a section of the old Boston-to-Albany Post Road, and a cellar hole.

With the help of a recent grant from the Federation for Historic Services in Troy, New York, I am working with two senior-level history museum professionals to develop a five-year education plan for our trail system. We envision educational labels and brochures along the trails which will help the visitor understand changes in the land over time. When this project is completed, we will be one of only a handful of museums across the country with such a trail system to help teach environmental history.

The symposium on June 10 will be of value to anyone interested in history, and in today's environmental issues, land use, preservation, and nature. If you have questions about either June event, please call me at 528-6888.

— Lisa Simpson

LAND TRUST NEWS

The Monterey Preservation Land Trust held its annual meeting on May 14. The following board members and officers were elected: Fred Chapman, Andrea Dunlop (President), Chris Dunlop, Robert Emmel (Clerk), Storrs Olds, Eric Roper, Joyce Scheffey (Treasurer), and Roger Tryon (Vice President). It gives us great pleasure to welcome Fred Chapman to our board.

We want to thank all who returned proxies. Since our renewal notice went out a little over three weeks ago, we have had forty-five families respond (eighty-two people) and thirty-six proxies returned. This is gratifying indeed.

The Housatonic Valley Association is sponsoring its annual river cleanup again this coming September. They have invited all area land trusts to take part in this effort, and enlist their memberships to work on a local waterway, or be assigned a site along the Housatonic River proper.

We felt strongly that we would like to work on our own Konkapot, and other brooks and streams that run through Monterey. We hope and trust our members will concur.

Anyone interested in this project please call any board member. Do you know of a place along some Monterey waterway that needs particular attention? Take some walks this spring and summer, and keep your eyes open. Tell us what you see, and please plan to help in September.

— Joyce Scheffey

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CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Welcome to the glorious days of summer!

We thank everyone who contributed to the Third Annual Family Fun Day. The intermittent rain did not dampen our spirits. About $1,500 was raised for the playgroups and for parent-to-parent volunteer programs.

Parent-child playgroups will be ending with the public school year. Check with your local leader to learn the schedule. We plan to run two parent-child playgroups in the summer during July and August: Tuesdays, 10 a.m.–12 noon at the Housatonic School playground; Thursdays 10 a.m.–12 noon at the Undermountain School playground in Sheffield. Rain cancels the group that day.

Family Education and Support Services will undergo some personnel changes: Wendy Jensen will be leaving in June to pursue other career interests—we wish her the best, we'll all miss her. Miriam Cervera will be Playgroup Coordinator and Loren Kinnaman will be Assistant to the Family Education and Support Group Coordinator.

We are seeking new playgroup leaders for the fall. Interested? Call Claudette Callahan or Miriam Cervera at 528-9311. Training is scheduled for August 15, 10 a.m.-12 noon at Children's Health Program in Great Barrington.

Training for parent-to-parent volunteers is scheduled for June 30, July 7, 14, 21, and 28, 7-9 p.m. at the Children's Health Program. After training, volunteers are matched with a family in which the mother is pregnant or has a child younger than two years old. Volunteers are trained to give information about area services and child development. They can help with transportation to important appointments, and be a friend. Anyone interested please call Claudette.

The Southern Berkshire Task Force on Families and Children will sponsor two workshops this summer led by Bob Boylston (Berkshire Center for Families and Children). Each is titled "New Games for Parents and Children," and they will be held at Undermountain School in Sheffield. The first, on June 27, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., is for parents and children from kindergarten age through grade three, and the second, on July 11 at the same time, is for parents and children in grades four through six. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a lunch. To register call Claudette.

The parent-infant social hour will be held June 28, 1–3 p.m. at Grove Park in Great Barrington. Siblings are invited. If it rains, same time on June 29. Grove Park is on Grove Street in Great Barrington, off East and Bridge Streets.

— Claudette Callahan

MONTEREY NATURE WALKS

Bonner McAllester will lead a series of four nature walks again this summer, Friday mornings in August, 9–10:30 a.m. The walks will be in Monterey and are open to anyone six years old or older (adults are welcome this year). Enrollment is limited to ten, so call 528-9385 if you are interested; at this writing there are six openings left.

COMMUNITY DINNER

After a winter lull, the Monterey Community Dinners will again be held the second Wednesday of each month in the social room (basement) at the Monterey United Church of Christ. The first of the season falls on June 8, and will begin as usual at 6:30. The dinners are always pot luck with drinks provided. After dinner and socializing we have a special program of interest to everyone.

The June dinner program will feature a musical performance by Monterey's own Josh Aerie, a junior at Monument Mountain High School. He will give a cello concert and talk about his experience performing last month in Spain with the Empire State Youth Orchestra. The concert is sponsored through a grant from the Monterey Cultural Council. Grant funds assisted Josh with his trip to Spain.

Community dinners are a great way to meet your neighbors (adults and children), eat great food, and attend an entertaining and educational program. Come and enjoy what is special about Monterey—our community!

— Lisa Simpson

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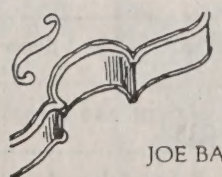

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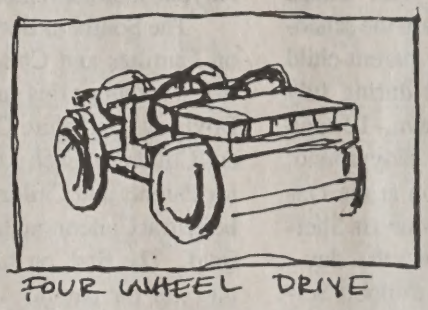
GALLERY OPENS SEASON

The Gallery in Monterey open its second season on Saturday, June 18, with an all-members show entitled "New Art: New Season." The art gallery is located in the old Tea Room, an historic building across from the Monterey General Store in the center of the village on Route 23.

Four shows featuring the works of the members and other area artists are planned for the summer, including the popular "All Monterey Show." Once again The Gallery offers artwork in watercolor, painting, sculpture, photography, and jewelry, with a diverse range of styles.



There will be a reception for "New Art: New Season" on Saturday, June 18, 5 – 7 p.m. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet the artists and see the exciting new works.

The Gallery is open on Saturdays 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., on Sundays 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., and weekdays by appointment. We look forward to seeing you this summer at The Gallery.

— Nicky Hearon

MONTEREY GRANGE

The Monterey Grange No. 291 met on May 4 and enjoyed a variety program. Plans were discussed for Awards Night on June 15, when the meeting is open to the public. A pie sale held at K-Mart in Great Barrington was a success, and the Grange thanks all who took part. Proceeds will be donated to Berkshire Transportation for the Elderly.

The Grange will furnish cookies for the Red Cross at Veterans' Hospital in Leeds on July 3. Cookies may be left at Mary Wallace's house on July 1.

At the meeting on May 18 Deputy Arvilla Dyer from Plainfield made her official visitation, and there was a variety program and memorial service. The monthly birthday cake was baked by Worthy Master Tolitha Butler.

The Grange has been invited to Friendship Night at West Stockbridge Grange No. 246 on June 6. Election of officers will be held at the meeting of Monterey Grange No. 291 on June 1. Members are urged to attend.

— Fraternally,
Mary Wallace, Lecturer

Roger Tryon

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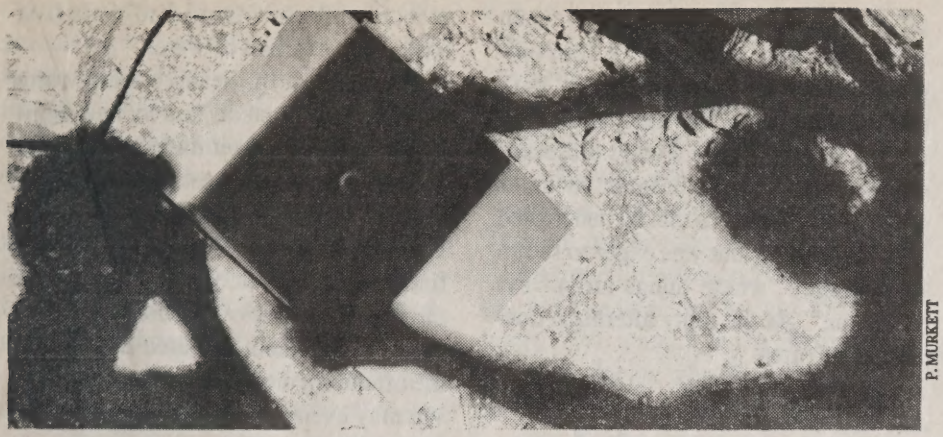
Blue Spruce, 6 – 8 feet, full and dense	$100
Balsam Fir, 6 feet	$75
Balsam Fir, 6 – 8 feet, full and dense	$110
White Spruce, 6 feet	$65
White Spruce, 6 – 8 feet, full and dense	$90
Scotch Pine, 6 – 8 feet, moderately full	$75
Apple Trees, 2 1/2 – 4 feet	$150 & up



P. MURKETT

An annular eclipse of the sun, such as the one that swept across the country on May 10, occurs when the moon is at the farther reach of its elliptical orbit around the earth, and its disc does not completely block the circle of the sun, but leaves a ring, or annulus. The image of the eclipsed sun pictured here was projected through a 3/8" hole in a scrap of formica, but such neat holes are really unnecessary. You can project the sun's circular image through an irregular aperture—the hole made by your thumb and forefinger, for example. Had there been leaves on the trees around here that day, the forest floor would have been dappled with scallops. If you missed the show, don't worry. It will return in 2012, and if you're out West then you can see it for yourself.

THE OBSERVER

April really laid the winter to rest. Its high was 26° warmer than March's high; the low was 28° warmer; the average temperature added 11°. Makes a difference. This April was warmer and wetter than it usually is, according to the norms recorded in Pittsfield. Monterey, in turn, recorded warmer temperatures than Pittsfield by more than three degrees on average, but precipitation in both places was almost exactly the same. There was no significant flooding.

High temp (4/27)	90°
Low temp. (4/5)	25°
Avg. high temp.	60°
Avg. low temp.	37°
Avg. temp.	49°
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	43.4°
Precip. occ.	12 days
Total precip.	4.68" rain
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	3.41"
High bar. press. (4/12)	30.46
Low bar. press. (4/6)	29.70
High humidity (4/6)	100%
Low humidity (4/22)	50%
Avg. wind speed	17 mph
High wind gust (4/16)	52 mph

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JULIUS MINER

Julius Miner was one of the most remarkable men I ever knew. He and his twin brother Lester ran the Langdon store for many years. Recently I found some notes I made about Julius when I was fifteen. Perhaps some of my recollections and quotes from my earlier self will jog the memory of others.

As I grew up I thought I had known Julius and Lester Miner forever—certainly from my earliest childhood days. These kindly men greeted me cheerfully when I came into the store on weekdays with my grandfather, Herbert Peterson. On Sundays we saw them in church, where they took up the collection and Mrs. Julius Miner played the organ. Lois and Frances Miner were about my age, and they sang in the church choir along with Mr. Abercrombe, Mrs. Miner's brother.

Somehow Julius sensed in me a fellow naturalist, one who could share his favorite pastime of observing plants and animals. When I entered the store he would exclaim, "Georgianna! I have a butterfly for you!" Then he would hunt behind the various cans and jars until the perfect specimen was found. On other occasions he would invite me to come outside and view his latest experiment. When he put white strings in the ground, earthworms moved them into their burrows! He wrote up the findings for a nature magazine with great excitement; they were published!

As a child I felt certain that the main objective of Julius' life was not to make money. Instead he was there to enjoy himself to the fullest and make others happy. Many times he arrived at our cottage in the pouring rain to deliver groceries. We would ask him to tell us stories of Monterey, and he would happily draw up a chair to the fire and remain there most of the afternoon. As he completed each story, he would say, "Isn't that grand?" Julius was much more than a town historian—we always discussed current events and the latest books as well. He informed us that he had visited New York City, but was eager to return to Monterey "where things are always going on." As the rainy afternoon continued, he often reminded us that "Lester was born ten minutes later." I gathered this meant that Lester could take care of the store by himself without any difficulty whatsoever.

My childhood recollections of the store were as follows. "Almost any afternoon you can push through the swinging screen doors of the Monterey store and find Mr. Miner presiding over the long counters on either side of the room. His blue eyes will beam over the top of his thick glasses and he will say in his mild, polite voice, "And what can I do for you today?" He will take your order for bread, thread, lamb chops, post cards, seeds, chewing gum, magazines, or a slab of store cheese with the greatest delight. Everything is deftly wrapped in brown paper with white string pulled down from somewhere near the ceiling." As far as I was concerned, going to the store was just an excuse to talk with Julius about his collections. "Flies and moths are kept in a box along with the white thread. The butterfly collection is usually on the shelf behind the mayonnaise jars. Tadpoles are on the desk at the rear of the store. Often I find a rare frog back there in a pail of water."

At the rear of the store there was a refrigerator for meat, butter, and eggs. At this point I am reminded that Julius was scrupulously honest, but also unbelievably positive about his merchandise. We arrived late one Friday evening to find that he had only frankfurters left. Saying "they have only a little mould on them," Julius demonstrated how easily the offending mould could be wiped off. We may even have bought some, out of respect for him.

As I grew older I was allowed to explore the upper floors of the building and examine the dusty piles of photographs, candle molds, and patent medicines. One box of picture frames said "$12 per thousand" on the cover. There was excitement in leaping over a hole in the attic floor that went straight down to the cellar. A pulley was used to pull things up.

Every visit with Julius was educational. Once he took me on a walk to collect spearmint leaves, and taught me how to dry them. Back in Brooklyn my mother, Olive Davis, failed to be amused when she found that I had mixed these leaves with her supply of tea.

The greatest fun I associate with Julius is the search for desirable real estate. Red haired Elizabeth Cornish, my mother's closest friend, wanted to purchase "a lovely old home in Monterey." Her husband was managing editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, so the wherewithal was there. However, I always knew that Elizabeth would never buy a house, and I hope that Julius knew it too. Sheer delight in spending an afternoon with Julius was the real purpose of our frequent outings. My teenage notes describe the conveyance for these excursions: "Mr. Miner has a 1928

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Chrysler which is several feet off the ground with a high roof. In starting up, it says 'Chug...chug' and finally...'pouf'...and off we go. Sitting down in it is like seating yourself on an old horsehair sofa with the springs all undone and coiling up at you through the material. The roof of the car leaks when it rains; the tires are always going flat. Mr. Miner loves taking people places and they go happily with him."

It seemed to me that Julius had a key to every house in the community—so that he could take care of "emergencies"—and any sudden desire the owner might have to sell or rent the property. Even the Bidwell house was open to our inspection. A more modest house which Julius thought just right for Elizabeth was situated on Route 23 directly across from its intersection with Hupi Road. Julius turned the key and then whipped out his handkerchief to turn the doorknob. "We mustn't touch anything because the people who lived here had the itch!" We tiptoed through the cottage, fearful of contracting the disease at every step. Needless to say, Julius assured that the Itch House (as we called it afterwards) was never sold. Its remains can still be viewed behind some trees.

I hope that others will write to the *Monterey News* with memories of Julius Miner. Naturalist, businessman, churchman, story teller, historian—surely he was one of the most versatile, loved, and colorful personalities the town had ever known.

— Jana Burch Shepard

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dried out to smiles
and languid assurance

that over the long
haul nothing is held

against us. Then who

is this come posting
a hundred years late

a date disturbing old
bones with new?

No relation we claim
here graves of our own

choice, freely electing
familiarity with worn

markers, making peace
with death over

the moat of centuries.
This freshly cut

hole trespasses.

— Royal Shepard

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1993

TO A CECROPIA

Do you remember how life was
Before Mother Nature changed you so?
You had to crawl where' er you went;
You had no wings to help you go...
Then Mother nature made for you
A warm and soft cocoon...
There through the winter cold you slept.
You would discard it soon
When gentle Springtime beckoned
As she opened wide your door...
And out you came, a gorgeous moth!
Your crawling days were o' er!!!

— E. Kimberley

QUESTION

Pink quince spray
in your blue vase!
did it come
from a young or an old tree?

— A. O. Howell

WILD APPLE BLOSSOMS

Clouds of color, pale, and fragrant too,
Every May they gather in the view.
These apple trees in woods or by the road
Have no connection with some man's abode,
Or woman's either, they are here by chance,
Results of nature's reproductive dance.

A cinqapace of chipmunks carrying seeds
And dropping them among the roadside weeds;
A gallop by an indigestive horse
Picked up and flown by juncos in due course.

Or seeds that were gavotted in the wee
Intestines of a local chickadee;
A galliard in a coyote's hasty gut,
Let fall as he pursued a rabbit's scut.

I may, myself, have started some of these
With apple cores tossed out among the trees,
Chanting our old family excuse:
"Not littering! A meal for fox or moose!"

Whatever means have brought these trees to bloom,
They help dispel a too-long winter's gloom.
Of sour or tasty food the consequence,
In nature's program book it all makes sense:
She wrote a name down, someone's turn to dance,
We're only ignorant, who call it chance.

— David P. McAllester

APRIL

For half-a-day I flung up dirt
(These bones are grown so thin!)
Four joints, six sinews did me hurt
And stunned ambition lay inert
Undone in the April wind.

Eight feet by four, three quarters deep,
The wound on the garden floor;
But all must plant if they would reap
And since I plant, those stones must heap
That had flocked in the dirt before,

So went to earth on thin old bones
To grub in the spaded mud
To heave the herded rocks and stones.
(Maugre this spine that mutely groans
And sudden blots of grubber's blood.)

I wrestled there an asparagus bed,
A plot for withered roots
To appearances all sere and dead
That will by time grow green instead—
Twenty Aprils' asparagus shoots.

But I speak it here that I'll not see
Twenty Aprils breed and fade
And this bed I laid so sweatily
Will pleasure a picker who will not be
Nor lover nor tender to a bed unmade.

Pleasure a picker!—though I start to doubt
Vegetables the owners' sport—
Down the decades the gladsome shout
Reverberates, In!, *or,* It's out!
This heart's-won garden a tennis court.

— Jim Michelman

DESERT DREAM, WITH ROADRUNNERS

Last month I had a persistent dream that I was in the Chihuahuan desert of southwest Texas, or possibly on some distant planet. I dreamed I went walking in a dry, dramatic landscape with my brother discussing science fiction. I think I told him I don't read it because I don't have the imagination to keep up with it; it's all I can do to keep myself straightened out when I'm awake right here in the actual reality of this life, this planet.

My dream lasted about a week. I took that powerful drug, airplane travel, and went into an altered state (well, Texas) in which the woodpeckers stash acorns in rows of holes in tree-bark, making "granaries" which they defend in cooperative groups of about eight birds. These groups are also cooperative breeders, sharing mates and a nest site. They put all their eggs in one place and experience a greater per capita reproductive success rate than can be found in smaller groups or pairs (or larger groups).

I saw a cuckoo that eats rattlesnakes, is twenty-two inches long, and can run up to twenty miles per hour. People say that back before automobiles these birds used to race buggies and buckboards along the dirt roads. They are called Greater Roadrunners, and I bought almost every postcard I found of them, looking for one that looked like the one I saw. She drifted across an asphalt driveway, by a parking lot, and every time some other kind of bird flew over (there were cactus wrens), she dropped her crest and crouched low to the ground. I only saw her on the road because as soon as she reached the other side she faded gently into the mesquite, yucca, and prickly pear.

Roadrunners don't fly much, although they have good wings. I watched one in the town of Lajitas near the Trading Post. She hopped up into a small cottonwood tree, causing all the resident little birds to make a great squawking. (Sometimes she will eat another bird, but most of her meat diet consists of insects, lizards, squirrels, and snakes.) She slid up and up in this tree, got near the top, then flew down on short, rounded wings. On the ground she leaves X-shaped foot prints because her toes are arranged two forward and two back.

I saw a coyote, too, also crossing the road. She was reddish and small, with a tidy coat and terribly skinny legs. In my childhood I used to see a frenetic cartoon show on television featuring a coyote and a roadrunner and dynamite (or similar violence). The ones I saw in my dream are quiet, graceful, and fast without being hurried.

My dream of the Texas desert was quiet and huge; maybe that's why it held onto me for so long. I crossed the Rio Grande in an aluminum rowboat with bits of alfalfa hay in the bottom. The oars were made of big pieces of pipe with squarish plywood bolted onto one end. In Mexico I saw waxy plants called candelilla which are pulled up and carried by mule or burro to a boiling place, kind of like our sugar house. But we make syrup when it is cold outside and these wax-boilers keep a fire going when it is 100 degrees or more. The wax is boiled out of the plant and rises to the surface of the pan where it later cools to make chunks which are milky-green and hard. This is sold for cosmetics manufacture, and chocolate additives, and brings 85¢ per pound to the boilers. They have to process fifty pounds of candelilla plants to get one pound of wax, which is about like the ratio of sap to syrup here in Monterey. The money is a lot better for syrup, of course.

The wax-boilers live in a clean, quiet town called San Carlos which has a canyon like Eden. Many springs trickle and gush down its vertical walls, supporting blankets of ferns. I found calcite crystals in a little cave just up out of the canyon and saw a black phoebe, which reminded me of home because a phoebe is a phoebe after all.

I should tell my brother that as long as science fiction provides me with a phoebe I can probably get into it. In fact, maybe *I* was the sci-fi in the life of a little phoebe in Texas. Its foot was all snarled up in some kind of wicked polyester nesting material, the kind of thin, clinging fibers you can't ever break, and it dangled, fluttering, a few inches below its nest. After I cut it loose and cleaned it up, it flew off, a baby ready to fly. The mother went with it and I took down the nest. To my mind this was significant interaction, a crossing over which altered the fate of a phoebe.

I got back on the plane, woke up in my own bed, and checked out the phoebe nest under our eave. I'm awake now, but I miss the desert where the mesquite roots reach sixty feet down for water and the prickly pear cacti bloom for miles like yellow light bulbs when the sky is grey. My imagination is awake thanks to my dream. I guess that's what dreams (and science fiction) are for: to wake you up.

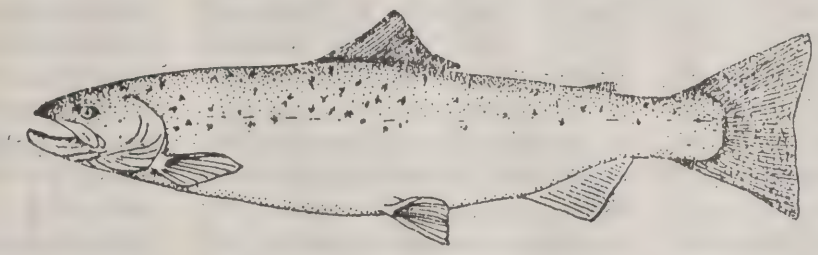
— Bonner J. McAllester

OUR ENDANGERED SALMON HATCHERY

Readers may remember Eleanor Kimberley's informative article on the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery in *The Monterey News* of July, 1988. This important facility began as a private hatchery on John Scully's farm about one hundred years ago. The family willed the farm and hatchery to the federal government in 1916, and it became the Berkshire Trout Hatchery. Since 1975 it has operated as an adult holding and smolt production facility for Atlantic salmon.

This "king of the New England rivers" was abundant, originally, as far south as the Housatonic, but became a victim of the Industrial Revolution. Dam systems and pollution eliminated salmon from all rivers south of the Penobscot by the mid 1800s. The Green Revolution of the 1970s included the long lost salmon in its program of protection and restoration. A coalition of private and public institutions, including the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service, began work in 1975 to reduce river pollution and restore fish passage past the dams, making it possible to recreate a salmon population.

Unique program at the Berkshire Hatchery. Salmon are called kelts when they return from the Atlantic to spawn in the headwaters of the streams where they were born. In the wild about 15% of all kelts survive to lay their eggs and return to the ocean, then continue the reproductive cycle in subsequent years. This high mortality rate is due in part to the fact that they go without eating for the six to eight months during which they live in fresh water while spawning. It seems that the same physiological changes that enable a young salmon (termed "parr") to migrate into the ocean and feed in salt water (the fish are then called "smolts") in turn prevent the kelts from being able to feed in fresh water.



Starting in 1981 the Berkshire Hatchery developed a special technique for reconditioning the kelts. Now one or two hundred kelts are trapped each year and brought to our hatchery. Here they are "taught" to eat; they become a domesticated breeding population. Some 80% of these make the transition successfully. They produce about 800,000 eggs annually, and 70% of these hatch, as compared with a bit over 50% in the wild.

Teaching the fish to eat involves individual conditioning. At the hatchery Jarlath Crowe and Fred Yost keep the kelts in optimum feeding conditions, just a few fish together in each of many small tanks. They are tempted with mixture of shrimp, herring, and beef liver, ground up and compressed into ping-pong sized balls. These are dropped into the water in front of them, and their individual feeding habits are monitored. Poor feeders may be moved to an isolated tank where they don't have to compete, and the same may be done with fish aggressive enough to interfere with others' feeding (so they *can't* compete). A slow feeder may be encouraged to get started with a special diet of chopped liver, the most irresistible salmon fare, held right under her nose.

Once they are eating, the kelts change from their characteristic black color to the familiar silvery color of a salmon in the open ocean, and they are ready to return to the Atlantic. But Berkshire kelts remain right here in special large tanks protected from the sun by dome-shaped covers. They thrive

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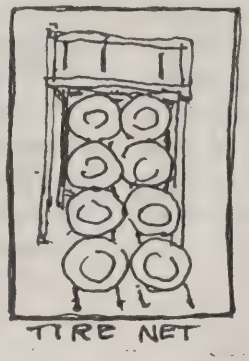
in the hatchery's cool water (never above 50°), the Jaccuzi-like current provided in the tanks, and the regular shrimp, herring, and beef liver feeding. Each fish produces 7,500 to 14,000 eggs every fall until she is about eight years old, the usual life span.

The best time to release newly hatched salmon into New England rivers is at the fry stage, only about two inches long. The fry have to evade their many predators, which is easier to learn when the fish are small and agile. No hatchery yet has been able to replicate the ocean diet that matures the salmon from smolt to kelt.



Where do they go in the ocean? We now know quite a bit about the mysterious and fascinating journey of the salmon when they embark on their growth period in the Atlantic. After one or two years (depending on feeding conditions) feeding in tributary streams, they are ready for a trip akin to the northward migration of certain birds which breed and nest in the sub-arctic. The salmon smolts enter the ocean and swim north to Newfoundland. Most then continue northwest to the Davis Strait, between Baffin Island and Greenland. Along the way they provide food for tuna, cod, bluefish, seals, and sea lamprey. Many are also caught by commercial fishermen. It is estimated that each year only about two of the 6,000 fry from a single salmon make it all the way back to spawn in the river system from which they started out. By some miracle of scent, taste, and memory, they lay their eggs near the very spot where they were released, or were hidden in the river gravel as eggs by their wild mother. Of the hundreds which now return from the ocean to the major New England rivers, about 10% are trapped to become egg producers in the restoration program.

Our endangered program. As the federal government feels the squeeze of the troubled economy, programs and personnel are cut back. We are already feeling this at Beartown State Forest, and some thought has been given to moving the salmon reconditioning process to a hatchery in North Attleborough, and putting the Berkshire Hatchery on hold with a caretaker. This has created a local wave of anxiety: it's only a step from "hold" to "discontinue." The program might not work as well elsewhere, given different water and climate conditions. The move might be more costly in several ways than staying put. Also, we here would lose the recreational and educational benefits provided by the Berkshire Hatchery. In addition to individual visitors, school and college classes and special programs come every year for the ecological and biological lessons to be learned at the hatchery. The hatchery also maintains several miles of nature trails on the property, offering walks of stunning beauty and great biological interest. The 130-acre Scully Farm is a Berkshire treasure.

Representative Olver is aware of the value of the Berkshire Hatchery, thanks to quick action by Tom Stokes of the Housatonic River Association, and other correspondents. When I called Olver's office in Washington, his secretary said that she has received so many calls and letters that she didn't need my list of reasons for keeping the hatchery open. At the recent budget hearing Representative Olver requested that the hatchery be kept in active operation. However, to maintain this position he needs all the support he can get in the way of letters and calls from his constituents. Messages congratulating him on his stand, urging him to keep up the fight, and asking what we can do to help are very important in the coming weeks and months. His phone numbers are 413-442-0946 (Pittsfield), and 202-225-5335 (Washington). Address The Honorable John W. Olver, Federal Building, 78 Center Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201, or (and!) 1323 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20515.

— David P. McAllester

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WILDLIFE SURVEY

Mammals

Marty and Greta Cherneff saw an adult black bear prowling in their yard and investigating their compost heap in Hupi Woods on May 15. Chandler Chapman saw a bear with two small cubs from her house on Harmon Road during the day April 30. The cubs were climbing in trees that border the field. Dale Duryea reports the tracks of a big male on their place. He is expecting calls about bear damage any time now, and most of them will be about "attacks" on bird feeders. His advice: discontinue that tempting spread right now! The birds no longer need it, and there is no way to train bears to be as delicate as birds when they come along, ravenous after the long winter's fast.

Deer are abundantly reported, several of the does looking as though they are expecting by the end of the month. On April 20 Mary Ward saw a bobcat cross Route 23 at the foot of the hill below the old Avalon School buildings.

Coyotes appear in the Duryea field almost every day; Dale saw a mink in the Konkapot early in May; beavers are beginning to build dams in likely places—from the beavers' point of view. The week of May 8 the Cherneffs saw a fox showing interest in the birds under their feeder.

Birds

The birds have come crowding back. Dick Reseska at Gould Farm reports this imposing list: solitary vireo; Chestnut sided and yellow rumped warblers; orioles; least fly catcher; wood and hermit thrushes; veery; house wren; barn, tree, and bank swallows; many different broadwinged hawks; bluebirds; ovenbird; phoebe; killdeer; mallards; towhees; yellowthroats; yellow warbler; white crowned sparrow; kingfisher. Another list, from the east end of Hupi Road (Joe Baker): April 15, solitary vireo; 19, cowbirds; 20, chipping sparrow; 23, flicker; 25, hermit thrush; 27, black and white, yellow rumped, and Nashville warblers; 30, black throated green warbler; May 2, ovenbird, veery; 3, rosebreasted grosbeak; 5, Louisiana warbler; 6, woodthrush; 7, great crested flycatcher; 10, oriole; 12, redstart; 14, blackburnian warbler; 15, chestnut sided warbler, yellowthroat.

Eleanor Kimberley saw a tree swallow casing out her bird box on April 28, and by May 11 they seem to have settled in. She is also seeing a ruby throated hummingbird. The Amidons report evening grosbeaks and house finches, both new to them on Sandisfield Road, and a phoebe nest (with five eggs), goldfinches, and a purple finch. There was a scarlet tanager at The Bidwell House on May 11. A pair of wood ducks investigated the McAllesters' pond and driveway May 5. Art Hastedt reported a pair of mallards and an extra drake flying back and forth between his two ponds as if they were trying to decide where to settle. Alice Howell, Walter Anderson, and bird watching visitors saw an indigo bunting (a rare sighting!) in an apple tree on Beartown Road May 16. Julian Mendel has seen Baltimore orioles out the window of his house. They are very likely nesting high in the tall trees along the fence row nearby.

Amphibians and Reptiles

The spring peepers are piping up in the swamps and Eleanor Kimberley has seen a big snapping turtle back from hibernation. Peter Murkett saw a number of small newts along Harmon Road into New Marlborough on May 1.

Insects

The black flies seem thicker than usual, but isn't that the way they always seem? Bonner McAllester says Vaseline keeps them off her horses' exposed places. Some say that Skin So Soft moistener is an effective repellant. Some butterflies are here: Joe Baker saw a spring azure on April 27.

Plants in Bloom

To start with the trees, it has been a spectacular spring, especially for the chartreuse tassels of the sugar maple and the white flowers of the shadblow. Willows, poplars, and red maples were in their last flower by May 4. Birches were in full catkins May 15. As for flowers, the coltsfoot seemed to be first, as usual, followed closely by bloodroot. As of May 4 there were cowslips in big patches in the swamps, red trilliums, fawn lilies, bluets starting, wild ginger, Dutchman's breeches, violets (yellow, white, pale blue, and dark blue), hobblebush (moosewood), ladies's smock, wild strawberry blossoms. By May 15 the coltsfoot was going to seed and dandelions, the larger, darker yellow look-alike, had taken their place and were carpeting meadows and lawns. The hobblebush provided a white understory to the taller white of the shadbush. Bluets were everywhere.

The trees were just starting to leaf out in mid May, late compared to other years, and compared to Great Barrington, which seems to be at least a week ahead of Monterey.

— David P. McAllester

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VOXED

For years I have noticed a few pine trees that stand a little higher than my house on the eastern shoulder of Dry Hill. They rise above the surrounding deciduous trees, and one in particular has a noticeably lopsided top. When the leaves are down I can see this tree on the short walk between my house and shop, and I can also see it from several other vantages around town: coming down Blue Hill Road under Livermore Peak, more than four miles distant as the crow flies; making the turn onto Curtis Road from Route 23, at a distance of about two and a half miles; and less than a mile away, coming down the hill past Lowland Farm on New Marlborough Road. In all these views the tree is on the horizon, silhouetted against the sky, a tiny bump on the soft curve of Dry Hill. I look for it out of habit, for comfort. It helps me know where I'm at, draws me home.

Recently a new landmark has appeared close to home. It's near the pines and a little below the horizon. Turning the corner onto Curtis Road, there's a notch in the line of nearby trees that precisely frames Fred and Chandler Chapman's wind generator on the distant hill. Their place is just uphill of my house. On a clear evening with a northwest breeze, the three white blades of the turbine catch the low, western sun and scatter its pale gold light. If the pine trees make a lighthouse, the wind machine will do nicely for a beacon.

I could not have imagined how lively and appealing this machine is. I sat on the Appeals Board for the Special Permit hearing now required by Monterey zoning to set up a facility for generating electricity from the wind. There was unanimous good will at that hearing, and the project was readily granted a permit, but there was also uncertainty as to the visual impact of a one-hundred-foot tower halfway up one of the taller hills around. No one really knew what it would look or sound like, or, for that matter, whether it would interfere with television reception in the area. (I haven't heard that it does.)

Three thirteen-foot blades on a turbine a hundred feet up can actually be hard to find against the trees, even from three-quarters of a mile away, the closest place from which to see the generator until you actually get into the clearing around the Chapmans' house. How visible it is depends on wind speed and direction, and that's the beauty of it: it responds to the conditions that affect us all—weather—in a way that's so animated it's easy to forget that the thing is mechanical. Sometimes I'm driving home unaware of wind and glance up to see the white blades flipping around pretty fast, looking agitated, moody; other times they barely move, showing only inertia, what a drag it is to do any work at all; when the wind is strong all you can see is a slowly rotating counterclockwise blur (the blades are spinning fast clockwise), and to find it against the trees you have to look for the white dot of the turbine body.

The Chapmans' big barn dwelling sits in the middle of a wheat field they have planted, and the wind machine rises from a rocky knoll right nearby, taller than the maples around it. Up close it's dominant. The generator has a bullet-shaped yellow and white turbine with a flat triangular tail at the end of a long stick. Sitting on top of its erector-set steel tower, it reminds me of a dragonfly or wasp. The look is lean, efficient, electrical. The lazy, old-fashioned, many-vaned wind pumps of the Midwestern American landscape are only distant relations of this machine.

It turns to confront every breeze, and in a light breeze its sound is like the wind in pines. In a rising wind the soft swish becomes a rapid, strong chuffing, but it is still an air sound, not like the raucous, explosive chop of a helicopter.

When I asked Fred Chapman why he has a wind generator, he talked about self-sufficiency, treading lightly on the earth, the negative aspects of our routine dependence on industrial electricity. It's a point of view we share; I, too, generate electricity (from a small water turbine), so I have been interested to see his project take shape, and hear his thoughts. He says he's less inclined to proselytize now regarding energy issues than he was fifteen years ago. Now he has more of a project than a cause. Fred says, "It's almost like having a pet." He looks up to see what the machine is doing when he comes downstairs in the morning, and watches it bathed in moonlight.

Peter S. Vallianos
Attorney at Law
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The system generates DC current that's stored in a bank of twenty gel-type, lead/acid batteries. The stored power becomes alternating current in an inverter, and the AC is fed into an ordinary circuit breaker panel on its way to lights and appliances throughout the house. When the wind is calm, a backup propane generator charges the batteries. As with most pioneering efforts, there are some bugs working their way out. Right now Fred is onto a different type of inverter that promises greater efficiency, which would help conserve his small reservoir of precious power.

In my mind I can hear a litany of reasoned objections to this project—I mean, the backup uses fossil fuel, so what's the diff? Hey, all that trouble and money just to put one household on line off the grid? You could house the homeless! You could shut down a nuke! Reasons are seductive, but I am more impressed by the cranky animus of talk like this than I am by any good sense that may lie under it. Energy issues are so vexing: the consequences of our everyday choices just may accumulate and do us in eventually, but no one knows that. We do know that our lives are in certain ways easy, and in these ways very difficult to change. I like small changes best, the ones that don't promise salvation. In my view the wind machine you may see on Dry Hill is a huge project that only *looks* small. It's just another machine, but when conditions are right, and you spot it from Curtis Road, see if it winks at you.

— Peter Murkett

P. O. BOX NINE, 01245

Nick Wool Retires

May 10, 1994

To the Editor:

For the last three years Nick Wool has served on the Finance Committee, the entire time as its chairman. He has now decided to give up the gavel and retire from the committee. Nick will be missed! He has given much of his time and effort to ensure that the town has been kept in check financially. Nick always had the knack of quickly grasping the whole picture and the bottom line on the various matters brought before our committee. He certainly taught me a lot about the ins and outs of municipal finance, for which I am extremely grateful.

A word of caution: when approaching Monterey from Great Barrington along Route 23, watch out for a spirited man walking a frisky dog (or the other way around). We don't want anything to happen to Nick, because we'd like to call on him in the future for his good advice and expertise.

— Greta Cherneff

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PERSONAL NOTES

Welcome back to **Rachel Rodgers**, who spent three weeks in France this March as an exchange student from Miss Hall's School in Pittsfield, where she is a senior. Rachel is the daughter of Bud and Cathy Rodgers of Main Road. She traveled with her teacher and three other students. They arrived in Paris for a few days of sightseeing, then took the high speed train to Bordeaux, where they attended school and toured the region with their host family. Emily Robert came to Monterey in April. Of course, the group stayed a few days in Paris again on the way home. Rachel had a wonderful time, and plans to return to France during her junior year in college, at the latest.

Congratulations to **Tish Thorpe** and **Steven Funk** on the birth of their son **Cody Steven**. Cody was born April 24 at Fairview Hospital, weighing in at 8 lbs., 2 1/2 oz. Proud grandparents are Art and Virginia Funk of Main Road, and Leroy and Linda Thorpe, also of Main Road.

Kudos for Monterey wrestlers **Joe Kopetchny** and **Jason Tanner**, who were among five members of the Berkshire Wrestling Club to qualify for the Northeast Cadet Regionals in Teaneck, New Jersey, as well as the Cadet Nationals in Columbia, Missouri in early July. Best of luck to both of you at the Nationals! And hats off to Jason, who took the first place gold medal at the Northeast Regionals in the 182.5 lb. weight class freestyle event, the only Massachusetts wrestler to win gold at the regional tournament. He was also the only Massachusetts wrestler to win *two* medals, taking as well the second place silver in the Greco-Roman event in his weight class. Way to go Jason!

Congratulations to **Nadine Hastedt**, who was recently promoted to Assistant Vice President at the Canaan National Bank. Nadine will continue to oversee the mortgage department, and will oversee the bank's Community Reinvestment Program as well. Nadine lives on Pixley Road with her daughter Stephanie.

And congratulations to sophomores **Kevin Ohman** and **Jason Tanner**, who were recently inducted into Mount Everett Regional School's Auriga Chapter of the National Honor Society. Scholarship, character, service, and leadership are criteria for membership. They join two other Monterey members, Leah Bohn and Bruce Snow.

Hats off to Monterey students named to the honor roll for the third quarter! At Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington, in grade nine **Morgan Clawson** made Honors, in grade eleven **Joshua Aerie** made High Honors, and in grade twelve **Meghan Sadlowski** made Honors. At Searles, in grade seven **Arianna Aerie** achieved High Honors. At Mount Everett Regional School in Sheffield, in grade nine **William Conklin** made High Honors and **Shaylan Burkhart**, **Kathryn Kopetchny**, **Jeffrey Pilot**, and **Noah Wright** made Honors; in grade ten **Kevin Ohman** and **Jason Tanner** made Honors, and in grade twelve **Leah Bohn** and **Bruce Snow** achieved High Honors. Also, in grade seven **David Shea** made High Honors, and **Cedric Mason**, **Ian Rodgers**, and **Lucy Rosenthal** made Honors, and in grade eight **Stephanie Hastedt** and **Jeremy Vallianos** both made Honors. Great job, all of you! Keep up the good work!

Congratulations to **Marta Makuc**, who was named to the Dean's List at Providence College for the fall semester.

And hats off to **Erica Mielke**, an honor student accepted at Notre Dame University in the class of 1998. Erica is the daughter of Chuck and Deb Mielke, formerly of Blue Hill Road, and the granddaughter of Kay and Bill Mielke.

Best wishes to new college graduates **Meghan Bradley** (Simmons College), **Anne Marie Makuc** (Wellesley), and **Patrick McBride** (Whitman College).

Very happy birthday wishes this month to **Todd Bynack** on June 8, to **John Higgins** and **Michael Bynack** on June 16, to **Sandy Gottlieb** on June 18, to **Christopher Blair** and **Pam Gauthier** on June 19, to **Jane Thorn** on June 23, to **Margrit Schuler** on June 24, to **Colm Higgins** and **Eileen Clawson** on June 28, and to **Grace Mendel** on June 30. And happy anniversary wishes to **John** and **Stella Hogan** on June 8, to **Sandy** and **Rita Gottlieb** on June 21, to **Kyle** and **Phebe Wing** on June 23, And to **Terry** and **Joan Wing** on June 29.

Your contributions are appreciated! Please continue to share news items, birthdays, etc. Just jot them down and drop them in the mail to me (Route 23), or give me a call at 528-4519. Thanks!

— Stephanie Grotz

GEORGE A. MENSI

George A. Mensi, formerly of Tyringham Road, died on Monday, May 9, at Fairview Manor in Great Barrington, where he had resided since 1991.

He was born to Guilio and Teresa Ansaldi Mensi on January 7, 1905, in New York City, where he was also educated. He was a graduate of the Bankers Institute in New York.

When he retired in 1970 as a vice president of Manufacturers Hanover Bank (now Chemical Bank) in New York City, he had fifty-two years of service.

Mr. Mensi had been a summer resident of Monterey since 1952, and moved here permanently after his retirement. He leaves two sisters, Mrs. Josephine Wondrasch of Monterey and St. Petersburg, Florida, and Mrs. Enes Grassis of Monterey and Scarsdale, New York, and a niece, Mrs. Georgianna Pecorelli-Eschen of Monterey, who cared for him for many years.

A Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Peter's Church in Great Barrington by the Reverend Merle Lavoie, pastor. Burial was at St. Peter's Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to Fairview Manor or the Monterey Fire Company in care of Hickey-Birches Funeral Home.

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THE AMIDON FAMILY OF VERMONT

Peter Amidon went back to Mount Everett (his alma mater) with his wife Mary Alice recently to teach dance to the younger children there. After Peter and Mary Alice spent a few days among the classes, the Amidon family band led a contradance in the gym for kindergarten through sixth grade students. Sam (aged twelve) played violin, and Stefan (aged nine) played the dumbeck (a traditional drum), with Mary Alice at the piano and Peter calling.

Peter is the son of Fran and Dean Amidon of Sandisfield Road. He grew up in Monterey, attending the town's one-room schoolhouses in the 1950s before his time at mount Everett. He was pleased to meet up with some old schoolmates as well as a few of his teachers during the visit.

The Amidon Family of Vermont has been performing together for three years. They sing traditional songs and play a variety of instruments. Sam is also a member of a kids' contradance band. The Amidons recently toured in New York, and have a six week European tour scheduled for next fall. Most fun for us are their performances at "home" in Monterey, including their appearance at The Bidwell House on July 23 this summer.

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CALENDAR

Friday, June 3 Mill River Red Sox vs. Monterey Yankees, Greene Park after supper.

Saturday, June 4

Fire Company Tag Sale, 8 a.m.–2 p.m. in the pavilion behind the firehouse. Donations, Dan Andrus, 528-5444; space rental, Gale at the General Store.

Wildflower Identification Walk, The Bidwell House, 1-4 p.m., free.

Sundays, June 5, 12, 19, and 26 AA meetings, 9 a.m. at the Monterey Grange No. 291.

Monday, June 6 Egremont Mets vs. Monterey Yankees, Greene park after supper.

Wednesday, June 8 Community dinner and cello concert by Josh Aerie, from 6:30 p.m., basement of Monterey United Church of Christ.

Thursday, June 9 Egremont Indians vs. Monterey Yankees, Greene Park after supper.

Friday, June 10 "The Myth of the New England Landscape: The Bidwell House Acreage," symposium at 7:30 p.m., Monterey United Church of Christ, free. Information, 528-6888.

Thursday, June 16 Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District meeting, 7 p.m. in the basement of Monterey United Church of Christ.

Saturday, June 18 Opening reception for "New Art: New Season," 5–7 p.m. at The Gallery in Monterey.

Tuesday, June 21 Free blood pressure clinic, downstairs at Town Hall, 9–10:30 a.m.

Saturday, June 25 Square and Contra Dance, New England style, at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, Mass., 8:30-11:30 p.m. Beginners and children welcome. All dances taught by caller Joe Baker, music by Mountain Laurel. Refreshments served. Adults $5, children $2 to dance until intermission. Information: 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578.

Sunday, June 26 Little League All Star Game, Greene Park, 1 p.m.

Saturday, July 9 Faux finishing workshop led by Laurel Tewes and Andy Matlow, 1-4 p.m. at The Bidwell House. $15 includes all materials.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Erika Crofut, pp. 9, 10, 12, 13, 19; Bonner McAllester, p. 14; Riley Murkett, p. 5; Julie Shapiro, pp. 8, 16.

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